

## Message Text

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43

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

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R 181120Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO USINT CAIRO

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 1801

S E C R E T SAIGON 2139

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OCLR, EG, VS

SUBJECT: GOE REQUEST FOR HELP IN OVERFLIGHT OF SOUTH VIETNAM

REF: CAIRO 0715

1. I HAD REFRAINED FROM TAKING UP QUESTION OF GOE OVERFLIGHTS UNTIL FOREIGN MINISTER BAC HAD RECEIVED WORD FROM PRESIDENT THIEU THAT HE WOULD BE RETAINED IN THAT CAPACITY IN THE NEW CABINET ANNOUNCED TODAY. I DID DISCUSS QUESTION WITH HIM THIS AFTERNOON.

2. I FOUND THAT GOE HAD NOT ONLY ALREADY RAISED QUESTIONS WITH GVN EMBASSY IN LONDON BUT HAD SENT ONE OF THEIR AIRLINE PEOPLE TO SAIGON, WHO WAS RECEIVED BY THE PRESIDENT OF AIR VIETNAM. IN BOTH CASES, THE FOREIGN MINISTER SAID, THE GVN RECEIVED THE OVERTURE WITH "GREAT POLITENESS" BUT REMAINED NON-COMMITAL.

3. I AM EXTREMELY GRATEFUL TO AMBASSADOR EILTS FOR THE SKILL WITH WHICH HE HAS SET THE STAGE FOR THE NEXT STEPS: BUI DIEM, FORMER GVN AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON IS GOING TO THE STATES THIS WEEK TO ASSIST IN WINNING SUPPORT ON CAPITOL HILL FOR NEXT AID APPROPRIATION CYCLE. HE IS ABLE, INTELLIGENT AND PERSONABLE. I TOLD BAC IT OCCURED TO ME THAT IT MIGHT BE USEFUL FOR BUI DIEM TO GO VIA CAIRO AND KEEP THE DIALOGUE GOING, THEREBY ACHIEVING AMBASSADOR EILTS OBJECTIVE SET OUT IN SECOND SENTENCE, PARA 4 REFTEL, AND PERHAPS ADVANCING PROBLEM TOWARD MUTUAL  
SECRET

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SATISFACTORY SOLUTION.

4. BAC AGREED AND SAID HE WOULD SO RECOMMEND TO PRESIDENT THIEU TOMORROW MORNING. I POINTED OUT THAT VISIT TO CAIRO WOULD

COME OPPORTUNELY ON HEELS OF SAUDI ARABIAN ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH RVN SCHEDULED TO BE ANNOUNCED WEDNESDAY, 20 FEBRUARY 1974 IN RIYADH AND SAIGON.

5. BAC IS FULLY ALERT TO GREAT ADVANTAGES TO GVN THROUGHOUT MIDEAST AND AFRICA IF GVN PRESENCE COULD BE ESTABLISHED IN BAIRI. HE DOUBTED WHETHER EITHER GVN INTERNAL OR INTERNATIONAL SITUATION WOULD PERMIT THIS AS LONG AS THE SO-CALLED PRG WAS RECOGNIZED IN CAIRO BUT HE FULLY AGREED THAT KEEPING THE DIALOGUE GOING WOULD BE USEFUL.

6. BAC WILL INFORM ME TOMORROW OF PRESIDENT THIEU'S DECISION WHETHER TO ROUTE BUI DIEM TO WASHINGTON VIA CAIRO. THE FOREIGN MINISTER ASKED WHETHER AMBASSADOR EILTS COULD ARRANGE A VISA FOR BUI DIEM IF THE DECISION WAS FAVORABLE. I SAID I WOULD INQUIRE, BUT I WAS CERTAIN THE ANSWER WOULD BE AFFIRMATIVE. MARTIN

SECRET

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